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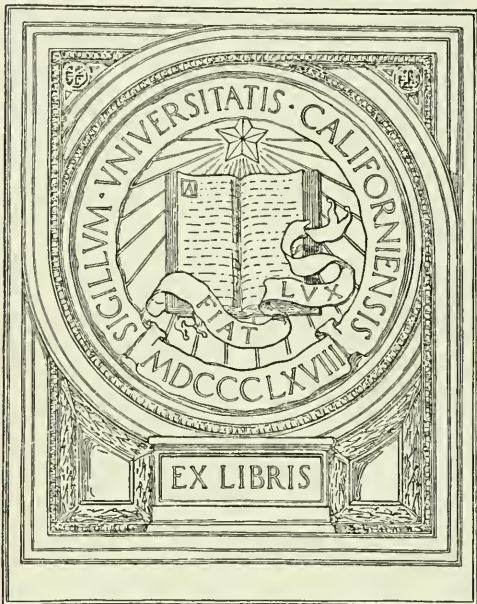


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The Free Kindergarten
in Church Work

By
R. Heber Newton

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THE FREE KINDERGARTEN IN CHURCH WORK.

By Rev. R. HEBER NEWTON, D. D.

Republished from Barnard's American Journal of Education.

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EDUCATION

THE FREE KINDERGARTEN IN CHURCH WORK.

BY REV. R. HEBER NEWTON, D. D.,
Rector of Anthon Memorial Church, New York.

CHURCH WORK—EDUCATION.

Church work is slowly coming to be read, I think, in the light of those great words of the Church's Head, which illumine his personal mission. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book he found the place where it was written—The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." "Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said unto him—Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached unto them."

The Master's mission was to heal the sickness and sorrow and suffering and sin of earth, in the power of that Holy Spirit which was to continue his work, slowly developing "the regeneration" of all things, in a new heavens and a new earth. His credentials were the signs of his power to effect this herculean labor. The Church's work must then be the carrying on of his task of social regeneration; a labor of practical philanthropy led up into the heights of spiritual reformation; and the "notes" of a true church will lie in its possession of the Master's power to further the slow evolution of the better order. If only to make earth the nursery for the heavens it must be put into order, the frightful ills of civilization be healed, the dreadful disorders of society be righted, and man be breathed out into the son of God. The magnificent aspiration of St. Paul is the ideal unto which all church work yearns—"Till we all come, (beggarly, diseased, vicious, malformed runts of humanity) in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man (manhood); to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Such a church work must plainly be a task of education. And unto this form of philanthropy every labor of love for suffering humanity is coming round. The experience of all who grapple with the legion forms of social ill results in one conclusion. Prevention is better than

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cure; and prevention is—education. Sanitarians, prison reformers, temperance advocates, charity administrators, pastors, all alike are joining in one cry—educate. We grow hopeless of making over again the wrongly made up, misshapen monstrosities charitably called men and women, and feel that the one hopeful work is in seeing that the unspoiled raw material, ever coming on, is better made up in the start. Given a true education and we may hope for a true manhood and womanhood, a true society growing steadily towards St. Paul's far off ideal. The Church's work would then seem to be that which the Master outlined in his parting word—"Go ye, disciple all nations;" teach men in the life of the perfect man, train them towards the ideal manhood;—a charge of education.

1. *Defects of the People's Schools.*

Education of one sort and another we have no lack of, but thoughtful people are coming to see, that which the wisest educators have known for no little time, that it is mostly very crude and raw. Along with the conviction that education is the solvent of the social problems, there is spreading fast and far the conviction that we have not yet educated the true education; that our present systems are viciously unsound and so are building up the old diseased body social instead of the new and healthy organism of the Coming Man. With all that is good in our People's Schools they seem lacking in certain vital elements. They fail to provide for a true physical culture, which, since health is the capital of life, is the prime endowment for every human being. They fail also to provide for any industrial training. Nearly all men and a large minority of women must earn their daily bread, and the majority of women must care for the bread their husbands earn. The great mass of men and women must be chiefly busied with manual work in the field, the factory or the house. To prepare this mass of men and women to do this necessary work successfully and happily, finding their bread in it honorably, and that bread of thought and sentiment on which the finer part of their beings live in the interest it calls forth—this would seem to be an essential part of a rational education for the common necessities of the common people; all the more imperative since the old time apprenticeships have disappeared. In the absence of this practical training all ranks of labor are crowded with incompetent "hands," and domestic economy is caricatured in most homes; a restless discontent with manual employments is pushing a superficially educated mass of men and women into the over full vocations supposed to be genteel, and storing up slumberous forces of anarchy among the workingmen; thus sapping health and wealth in the homes of the poor who must need both.

Then, to pass by other grave defects best behooving professional educators to speak of, there is a still more serious lack in our Common School system which the churches are naturally quick to feel. The

greatest minds have always united in the view so tersely expressed in Matthew Arnold's familiar phrase, "Conduct is three fourths of life." The end of all culture must be character, and its outcome in conduct. The State's concern in education is to rear virtuous, law-abiding, self-governing citizens. The Church's concern is not something different from the State's; it is the same plus something more. She too seeks to grow good subjects, only running their relation to Law up and on; men whose citizenship is in heaven. State and Church alike would nurture good men, for this world or the next. To this the Church believes with the State that moral culture is needful, but she believes also that religious culture is none the less needful. The churches feel the need of supplementing the education of the common schools with some ampler provision for moral and religious training. If the homes of the land were what they ought to be they would supply this lack. But because of the utter imperfection of education in the past, they are unfortunately far from being seminaries of character. Some other provision must be made.

2. *Inadequacy of Sunday Schools and Parish Schools.*

The churches have utilized a simple mechanism for moral and religious education in the Sunday-school. No word from one who owes so much to this institution can ever detract from its just honor. It has been and still is an indispensable provision for our present stage of development. It is doing a noble work which else were left largely undone. But its best friends are not blind to its limitations. The clergy generally are painfully aware of its utter inadequacy to the great task it has assumed. Superintendents and teachers feel that they are asked to make brick without being supplied with straw. For an hour or an hour and a half, sometimes two or three hours, on one day of the week, a crowd of children, often reaching into the hundreds, are gathered into one room, placed in the hands of a changing corps of volunteer teachers, mostly very young, animated generally with laudable motives, but too often painfully unconscious of the momentousness of the task they have lightly undertaken, and all untrained for the delicate work of soul fashioning. As a system of education in Christian character, such an institution is grotesquely inadequate. For that education must be chiefly a nurture, a tenderly cherished growth under the right conditions duly supplied; a training rather than an instruction, a daily not a weekly work. The ideal of such an education of course will be the story of the Perfect Man: a growth, gently nurtured, in a pious home, at the knee of a holy mother, through patient years; hastened to the flower, under the soft springtide of the soul, within the warmer atmosphere of the Temple, in the opening consciousness "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's?" But again I say we are concerned with the unideal state of earth to-day, whereon homes are not like the Nazarite cottage and mothers are far below the stature of the great souled Mary.

What is to be done now? *Something*, plainly, the churches feel, and are sore perplexed as to what that something is to be. A portion of the churches seem inclined to try in some way to make the Common Schools attend more carefully to moral and religious education. But how to do it does not yet appear. The religious phase of this problem is beset with baffling perplexities. Others of the churches are tending in the direction of Parish Schools. But these cannot hope to compete with the State Schools in mental culture, and so must offer to the parents of the land the choice between a good general education with a defective moral and religious training, and a good moral and religious training (possibly) with a narrower and feebler general education. The average American will not long hesitate in that alternative, when he can relieve his conscience by falling back upon the Sunday-school. Our people are thoroughly committed to the system of State schools, and will not favorably view any apparent sectarian opposition to them. We need, not a system substituted for the State schools and benefiting only a small portion of the people, but, one supplementing the State schools and benefiting the whole people. Is such a system discoverable? And can such a system for moral and religious nurture be made to supplement the Common Schools also in the other defects alluded to, the lack of physical training and industrial education?

3. *Importance of Infancy.*

The most valuable period of childhood for formative purposes is unclaimed by the State. The richest soil lies virgin, un-preëmpted, free for the Church to settle upon and claim for the highest culture. It is no new secret that the most plastic period lies below childhood, in infancy proper. Thoughtful people have long ago perceived that the chief part of all human learning is wrought in these seven years; the greatest progress made, the largest acquisitions won, the toughest difficulties overcome. No pretentious culture won in later years is really half so wonderful as the almost unconscious education carried on in the period of infancy. Dame Nature is busy with her babes and has them at incessant schooling. From the first dawn of intelligence they are under an unceasing series of lessons, in form and color, in weight and resistance, in numbers and relations, in sound and speech. Every sense is being called into exercise, cultivated, refined. The perceptions are ever at work observing, comparing, contrasting. Mastery is being won over every physical power; the eye, the ear, the hand, the feet being trained into supple, subtle skill. The bewildering fingerling of Rubenstein or Von Bulow is not a finer discipline than the games of the active boy.

The sentiments, the imagination, the reason, the conscience are undergoing a corresponding development in this period we think of as all idleness. Here and there we get hints of the reach of infant mind in its beautiful thoughts, its fine feelings, its ethical distinctions, its

religious musings. The veil lifts from the greatest of wonder lands, in which we all lived once and out from which we have passed through the waters of the river Lethe. We think lightly of the inner life of infancy because we know so little of it. We fancy that we are to teach our little ones religion. At the best we can only formulate the mystery which lies all round them, vague and nebulous but profoundly real. Below the best we succeed in botching and marring the divine growth going on within their souls, unseen by our dim eyes; in imposing our adult conceptions injuriously on souls unprepared for them; and so make the windows through which our sin-seared souls see light, the shutters closing the light off from those holy innocents whose inner beings, angel-wise, do always behold the face of their Father in heaven. Wordsworth's ode is the very truth of the spirit world. The garden of the Lord, where God himself walks amid the trees in the cool of the day, is behind us all; and our best hope is to climb round to it in the "lang last," as the seer visions in the far future of the race and of the individual; when having been converted and become as little children we enter once more the kingdom of heaven. For, as these words remind us, it is no less an authority than that of the Lord Christ that teaches us to view in childhood the spiritual ideal.

Infancy then, (the first seven years), is the most vital period for the formative work of a true education, whether we have regard to physical, mental or moral and spiritual development. Plato saw this long centuries ago. "The most important part of education is right training in the nursery." [Laws 1 : 643.]

As late as our greatest American theologian—the noblest of English theologians himself being the judge—this view reiterates itself with especial reference to the task of moral and religious culture the churches have in hand. Dr. Bushnell's "Christian Nurture" insists upon the prime importance of infancy.

4. *Educative Function of Play.*

If then the only period of childhood not foreclosed by the State be precisely that which is most hopeful for the true education, the education which aims for something like an integral culture, a fashioning of the whole manhood into health, intelligence and virtue buoyant with the love of God, the question becomes one of technique. How are we to utilize this most plastic but most delicate of periods? How teach and train the tender lives which seem unready for anything but play? All high and serious labor upon this period seems ruled out by the fractible nature of the material upon which we are to work. These fragile bodies can bear little fatigue, these tender minds can bear little strain, these delicate souls can bear little public handling without spoiling. "O, slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written!"—must we not hear the Spirit of Truth still sadly whispering? Centuries since did not the teacher sent from God to the Greeks,

the wisest mind of the wisest people of antiquity, tell the world—if, having ears to hear, they would hear—the riddle of this Sphinx?

“Our youth should be educated in a stricter rule from the first, for if education becomes lawless and the youths themselves become lawless, they can never grow up into well conducted and meritorious citizens. *And the education must begin with their plays.* The spirit of law must be imparted to them in music, and the spirit of order attending them in all their actions will make them grow; and if there be any part of the state which has fallen down will raise it up again.” [Republic 4 : 425.]

“According to my view, he who would be good at any thing must practice that thing from his youth upwards, both *in sport* and earnest, in the particular manner which the work requires; for example, he who is to be a good builder, should play at building children’s houses; and he who is to be a good husbandman, at tilling the ground; those who have the care of their education should provide them when young with mimic tools. And they should learn beforehand the knowledge which they will afterwards require for their art. For example, the future carpenter should learn to measure or apply the line in play; and the future warrior should learn riding, or some other exercise for amusement, and the teacher should endeavor to direct the children’s inclinations and pleasures by the help of amusements, to their final aim in life. . . . The soul of the child *in his play* should be trained to that sort of excellence in which when he grows up to manhood he will have to be perfected.” [Laws 1 : 643].

Plainly the natural activity of infancy is play, and as plainly the only possible education in this period must be through play. This is precisely the method of Mother Nature. She teaches her little ones all the marvellous knowledge they master in infancy through pure play of body and of mind.

So far from play being at all inconsistent with learning, the best work in education does in fact take on the character of play. A critic as unsentimental as Mr. Herbert Spencer lays down the law that all education, in so far as it is true, tends to become play. He tests all methods by this criterion—is it task work or is it to the child as good as play? It is our ignorance of child nature, our poverty of invention, our mechanicalness of method which leave learning mere work. All learning ought to be spontaneous, joyous. Calisthenics is turning into a semi-dancing, to the music of the piano; natural sciences are coming to be taught through excursions in the field and wood, and by experiments in the laboratory; the dry drill of languages is brightening into the cheery conversation class; the catechism in the Sunday school is yielding room for the music of hymns and carols. There is nothing incompatible between the merry play of the nursery and the school into which we would turn it, if only we can be cunning enough to devise a subtle illusion wherein as the children think they are only playing we shall see that they are also learning. Leaving them their free, sponta-

neous, natural impulses of playfulness, we may then lead these impulses up into a system which shall, with benign subtlety, unwittingly to the children, school them in the most important of knowledges, train them in the most valuable of powers, fashion them into the most precious of habits, open within them the deepest springs of eternal life. Only for this finest and divinest of pedagogies we must, as the greatest of teachers has taught us, get low down to the plane of the little ones, and ourselves become as children, that we may enter the kingdom of heaven. For as Sir William Hamilton, and long before him Lord Bacon, pointed out, childlike docility of soul is the condition of entering into that province of the kingdom of heaven which is truth, as well as into that which is goodness. the secret of philosophies and sciences as of theologies and life. To construct the true system of child-schooling we must be humble enough and wise enough to go to Mother Nature's Dame Schools and learn her science and art of infantile pedagogy. If some genius, child-hearted, should seriously set himself to study sly old Mother Nature in her most trivial actions, patiently watching her most cunningly concealed processes, he might steal upon her thus and catch the secret of the Sphinx's nurturing by play, and might open for us the ideal education for the early years of childhood. And this is just what Fröbel did. With unwearied patience and in the very spirit of this childlike teachableness he studied the plays and songs of mothers and nurses and children left to their own sweet will, till divining at last the principles underlying these natural methods he slowly perfected the kindergarten; verifying it by faithful personal experiment and bequeathing to the generations that should come after, the child-garden, the sunny shelter wherein in happy play the bodies, minds and souls of the little ones should beautifully grow out into health, intelligence and goodness.

5. *Purifying Influences of Happy Play.*

Visitors in a kindergarten watch its occupations and leave it with the somewhat contemptuous criticism—oh! its all very nice and pleasant, a very pretty play.

Were this all, the Kindergarten might enter a strong plea on its own behalf. In the foul tenements and the dirty streets and alleys of our great cities the tainted air is sapping the vitality of the children, poisoning their blood, sowing their bodies with the seeds of disease, and educating the helpless hosts who crowd every market place of labor, unfit physically to contend in the struggle for existence. In these dull and depressing surroundings a gradual stupefaction is stealing over their minds, preparing that unintelligent action wherein those whom Carlyle called "The Drudges" are taking their place in society as the human tenders of our super-human machines. In the sad and somber atmosphere of these homes, whose joylessness they feel unconsciously, as the cellar plant misses the light and shrivels and pales, the inner spring of energy and its strength of character, the *virtus* or virtue of the

human being relaxes, and their souls become flabby and feeble. Lacking the sunny warmth of happiness in childhood they lack through life the stored up latencies of spiritual heat which feed the noblest forces of the being. "We live by admiration, *joy* and love," Wordsworth says; which implies that we may die by joylessness.

True, the child nature will not wholly be crushed out, and in the most squalid so-called "homes" in the saddest streets it will play in some-wise, though it is literally true that not a few have their playfulness smothered within them. But what play! How dull and dreary, how coarse and low,—imitation, as the great Greek said of many of the stage-plays of children of a larger growth, "of the evil rather than of the good that is in them." A veritable mis-education in play, as all who are familiar with the street plays of our poor quarters too sadly know, copying the vile words and brutal manners which are the fashion of these sections, feeding the prurient fancies which Mr. Ruskin says are the mental putrescence gendered of physical filth in the over-crowding together of human beings. The play not as of the children of the Father in Heaven but as of the abducted little ones of the Heavenly Father, reared in the purlieus of their false father the Devil. So that there is a vast deal of philosophy in the remark contained in a Report of a certain Children's Asylum in London, to the effect that the first thing the matron found it necessary to do with many of the waifs brought into the Home was to teach them to play!

If only the little ones in their most susceptible years are gathered in from harmful surroundings, are shielded from scorching heats and chilling winds, are warded from the wild beasts that lurk around the valleys where the tender lambs lie, though in pastures dry and by turbid waters; if only, fenced in thus from the hearing of harsh, foul words, and from the seeing of brutalizing and polluting actions, they are left for the best hours of each day to disport themselves in innocent and uncontaminating happiness amid these "pretty plays," it would be an inestimable gain for humanity. For thus, in its native surroundings, the better nature of each child would have a chance to grow, and the angel be beforehand with the beast, when, not for an hour on Sundays, but *always*, their angels do behold the face of the Father in Heaven.

The Lord God made a garden, and there he placed the man. So the sacred story runs, deep-weighted with its parable of life. A garden for the soul, bright and warm in soft, rich happiness, sunning the young life with "the vital feelings of delight"—this is the ideal state, or as we now phrase it the normal environment, for child growth. As much of the conditions of such a child-garden as can be secured in "this naughty world" is the first desideratum for that education which looks on towards the second Adam, the perfect manhood, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. To open such Child Gardens and to place therein loving, sympathetic women to mother their plays and keep them sweet

and clean and gentle, this were to do for the growth of the Christ Child a work worthy of the Christian churches.

But this is far from all the good of the Child Garden. It is indeed only its outer and superficial aspect, in which, even before its most carping critics, who know not what they say and so are forgiven, Wisdom is justified of her children. Underneath these "pretty plays" there is a masterly guidance of the play instinct in the direction of the wisest and noblest culture. They are faithful reproductions of Mother Nature's schooling in play, and every part of the carefully elaborated system has a direct educative value in one of the three lines in which, as already indicated, our State system seems most defective; all three of which, in differing degrees bear upon that culture of character with which the Church has need to busy herself, in disciplining men into the perfect manhood of Christ.

6. *Physical Training of the Kindergarten and its Bearing on Character.*

The kindergarten plays form a beautiful system of calisthenics, adapted for tender years, and filled out with the buoyancy of pure sportiveness. The marching, the light gymnastic exercises, the imitative games, with the vocal music accompanying them, occupy a considerable portion of the daily session in an admirable physical culture. If ordinary attention is paid to ventilation, and the room be, as it ought to be, a sunny room, guarded against sewer gas and other "modern conveniences," this physical culture ought to have a most positive and beneficent influence on the health of the children. If a good substantial dinner is provided for them, one "square meal" a day added to the pure air and judicious exercise ought to lay well the first foundation, not alone of material, but of moral success in life. Health is the basis of character as of fortune. There is a physiology of morality. Some of the grossest vices are largely fed from an impure, diseased and enfeebled physique. Drunkenness, especially among the poor, is to a large extent the craving for stimulation that grows out of their ill-fed, ill-housed, ill-clothed, over-worked, unsunned, sewer-poisoned condition. Lust is intensified and inflamed by the tainted blood and the over-tasked nervous system. Purity of mind grows naturally out of purity of body. Physiologists understand these facts far better than ethicists. Then, too, lesser vices are in their measure, equally grounded in abnormal physical conditions. Faults of temper, irritability, sullenness and anger are intimately connected with low health, the under vitalized state which characterizes the city poor.

Perfection of character implies a happy physical organization, or that masterfulness of soul which is the rarest of gifts. Moderate appetites, a serene disposition, generous feelings, with their fellow excellences, may be the victory of the exceptional saints; but they may also be the natural endowment of the healthy common people. A harmonious body will sublimate the finer qualities of the soul. In man, as

in the animals, when we see such physical organizations we look to find such moral natures. Axiomatic as this is, it none the less needs to be reiterated in the ears of moral and religious teachers. To claim this is to raise no question concerning the relative priority, in genesis or in importance, of body or mind. Even if the body be, as I certainly hold, the material envelope drawn around the spirit, molded and fashioned by the quality of the soul; and the prime concern be therefore with the vital energy and purity of the spirit; still according to the materials supplied in food and air, will the body thus organized be determined, and its reflex influence tell imperiously upon the inner being. In striving to grow healthful souls we must, to this very end, grow healthful bodies. While feeding assiduously the forces of conscience and affection and will, we must largely feed them indirectly, by filling the physical reservoirs on which these virtues need must draw with sweet, clean, pure, full tides of life. The Church must learn a lesson from its Master, and be at once Good Physician and Merciful Savior; restoring health as well as remitting sin. And the beginning of this dual work seems to me to lie in some such system of infantile physical nurture, carried on under the name and in the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our churches are all more or less busied with feeding the hungry, and otherwise caring for the bodies of the poor. Will it not tell more on the work of saving men out of sin to put the money spent in alms to adults—largely misapplied and nearly always harmful to the moral fiber—into a culture of health for the children?

7. Industrial Training of the Kindergarten and its Bearing on Character.

The kindergarten plays form a most wise system for culturing the powers and dispositions which lay the foundation for successful industrial skill; and this also bears directly upon the supreme end of the Church's work—the turning out of good men and women.

The fundamental position of the kindergarten in a system of industrial education is recognized in Germany, and must soon be perceived here. The natural instinct of childhood to busy itself with doing something, its spontaneous impulse to be making something, is in the kindergarten discerned as the striving of that creative power which is mediately in man as the child of God. It is utilized for the purposes of education. Pricking forms of geometrical figures and of familiar objects on paper, weaving wooden strips into varied designs, folding paper into pretty toys and ornaments, plaiting variegated strips of paper into ingenious and attractive shapes, modeling in clay—these, with other kindred exercises, “pretty play” as it all seems, constitute a most real education by and for work. By means of these occupations the eye is trained to quickness of perception and accuracy of observation, the hand to deftness of touch and skill of workmanship, such as a child may win, the sense of the beautiful is roused and cultivated, the fancy fed and the imagination inspired, the judgment exercised and strengthened, original-

ity stimulated by often leaving the children to fashion their own designs, while habits of industry are inwrought upon the most plastic period of life, and the child accustomed to find his interest and delight in work, and to feel its dignity and nobleness. How directly all this bears upon the Labor Problem, the vexed question of philanthropy, is patent to all thoughtful persons. Every market place is crowded with the hungry host bitterly crying "no man hath hired us," utterly unconscious that no man *can* hire them save as a charity. For skilled workmen and work-women there is always room in every line. Employers are importing trained work people in most industries, while all around lies this vast mass of people who never were taught to find the pride and pleasure of life in doing thoroughly their bit of daily work.

Simply as a question of the prevention of suffering, the immediate step to be taken by those who would wisely help their poorer brothers is the provision of schools for technical training in the handicrafts, such as exist notably in Paris and in parts of Germany. And as the place to begin is at the beginning, any attempt to construct such a system of industrial education should start with the training of early childhood in the powers, the habits and the love of work, as in the Kindergarten. Miss Peabody's open letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson arguing for the Kindergarten as a potent factor in the solution of the Labor Problem was thoroughly wise. In so far as education solves the problem, the Kindergarten is the first word of the answer yet spelled out.

But the Labor Problem is not only the dark puzzle of want, it is, in large measure also, the darker puzzle of wickedness. Want leads to very much of the wickedness with which our courts deal. The prevention of suffering will be found to be the prevention of a great deal of sinning. How much of the vice of our great cities grows directly out of poverty, and the lot poverty finds for itself. Drunkenness among the poor is fed not only from the physical conditions above referred to, but from the craving for social cheer left unsupplied in the round of long, hard work by day, and dull, depressing surroundings by evening. Who that knows anything of the most pitiable class our communities show does not know whence and how their ranks are chiefly recruited. Of old the fabled city, to save its homes from being devoured, chose its fairest, noblest and best to offer up in propitiatory sacrifice, and bound Andromeda to the rocks a victim for the monster of the sea. Our cities send press-gangs through the humbler quarters, entrap their hungry daughters with baits of food, their struggling work girls, mis-educated to the ambition of becoming ladies, with seductive snares of ease and luxury and gentility, and bind their poor maidens to the rocks of pitiless publicity with chains forged from poverty, welded in famine, and riveted with sham pride; and thus, so say our wise men, preserve our homes intact. To eke out the insufficient wages of unskilled work there is one resource for working girls. To realize the day-dream of the fine lady there is the whispered temptation of the

Spirit of Evil. If the church would preserve the virtue so earnestly inculcated upon its Sunday-school children, it must not rest with inspiring the right spirit, it must impart the power to fashion the right conditions for virtuous life. It must not only teach the children to pray "Lead us not into temptation ;" it must train them so as to lead them out of temptation.

Nor is it only a negative good thus won for character in laying the foundations of industrial education. The more manly a boy is made, the stronger he becomes for all good aims, the larger the store of reserved forces on which he can draw if he really seeks to win a noble character. The more of "faculty," as our New England mothers called efficiency, a girl is endowed with, the robuster is her strengthfulness of soul; every added power of being garrisoning her spirit with a larger force for the resistance of evil. The mastery of the body, the culture of mental and moral qualities carried on in the process of developing a skilled worker, finding delight and pride in doing the daily work well, help mightily towards the supreme end of life. Patience, perseverance, strength of will, sound judgment, the habit of going through with a thing—these all tell on the great job the soul takes in hand. A number of years since Cardinal Wiseman's lecture on *The Artist and The Artisan* called the attention of the public to the necessity, not only on economic but on ethical grounds, of investing labor with dignity and clothing it with delight; of filling out the common tasks of the artisan with the spirit of the artist, and thus transfiguring manual labor into a spiritual education. Mr. Ruskin has been for years preaching sternly this new gospel. He finds in it a clue to the discontent and consequent demoralization of the mass of our unintelligent and thus uninterested labor, which turns from its ordained springs of daily joy, finding them empty, to drink of the turbid streams which flow too near to every man.

Again the ancient parable speaks unto us. In the garden the Lord God placed the man *to dress it and to keep it*. The divine education of man is through some true work given him to do. While he does that well, finding his delight in it, all goes well. Sin enters when, discontented with the fruit that springs up beneath his toil, he covets that which grows without his toil. The use of the world as abusing it, in drunkenness and lust and every prostitution of natural appetite, is found in the classes whose joy is not in their work, either as having no work to do, or as despising that which is necessarily done.

One of the finest and healthiest creations of the lamented George Eliot was Adam Bede, the carpenter whose work-bench was his lesson-book, whose daily tasks were his culture of character, and whose common labor of the saw and chisel fashioned thus a noble manhood. Is not this the inner meaning of the fact that the world's Savior came not as the princely heir of the throne of the Sakya-Munis, in the splendid palace of the royal city of Kapilavastu, but as the carpenter's son in

the cottage of Nazareth? So that again we see the need that the churches should make a Child Garden, and place the infant Adams therein to dress it and to keep it.

8. *Moral Culture through the Social Laws of the Kindergarten.*

And thus we come at last to the *crux* of the case. The Kindergarten is a system of child occupation, a curriculum of play, looking straight on to the supreme end of all culture—character; a child-garden whose fruitage is in the spirit-flowering induced therein, beautiful with the warm, rich colors of morality, fragrant with the aromatic incense of religion. It is essentially a soul-school, reproducing on a smaller scale God's plans of education drawn large in human society.

The little ones just out of their mother's arms are gathered into a miniature society, with the proper occupations for such tender years, but with the same drawing out of affection, the same awakening of kindly feeling, the same exercise of conscience in ethical discriminations, the same development of will, the same formation of habits, the same calling away from self into others, into the larger life of the community, which, in so far as civilization presents a true society, constitutes the education of morality in 'Man writ large.' Morality is essentially, what Maurice called it in his Cambridge Lectures, "Social Morality."

An order is established round about the little ones, environing them with its ubiquitous presence, constraining their daily habits, impressing itself upon their natures and moulding them while plastic into orderliness. Certain laws are at once recognized. They are expected to be punctual to the hour, regular in coming day by day, to come with washed hands and faces and brushed hair, to be obedient to the Kindergarten etc. A sense of law thus arises within their minds. It steals upon them through the apparent desultoriness of the occupations, and envelopes their imaginations in that mystery of order wherein, either in nature or in man, is the world-wide, world-old beginning of religion; while moulding their emotions and impulses into the habitudes of law wherein is the universal beginning of morality.

All of the special habitudes thus induced tell directly and weightily upon the formation of character; so much so that it is unnecessary to emphasize the fact, except perhaps in the case of the habit of cleanliness and the care of the person in general. "Cleanliness is next to godliness" ran the old saw, with a wisdom beyond the thought of most of those who glibly quote it in their missions of charity to the homes (?) of poverty, wherein to bring any true cleanliness needs nothing less than a new education. Cleanliness is essential to health, the lack of which saw, as already hinted, has so much to do with the temptations of the poor. It is equally essential to that self respect wherein ambition and enterprise root, and out of which is fed that sense of honor which so mightily supports conscience in the cultured classes. It is also, under the all-pervading law of correspondences which Swedenborg has

done most to open, inseparably inter-linked with purity, the cleanliness of the soul. Physiology and psychology run into each other undistinguishably in a being at once body and spirit, so that the state of the soul is expressed in the condition of the body, and is in turn largely determined by it. To care for the purity and decency of the temple used to be priestly service. To care for the temple of the Holy Ghost still should be viewed not only as the task of the sanitarian sexton but as the charge of the spiritual priesthood; not a policing of the building but a religious service in the building, an instruction in purity, a worship of the Lord and Giver of Life.

9. *Moral Culture through the Social Manners of the Kindergarten.*

In this miniature society there is a school of manners. One smiles in reading the account of the back-woods log school-house where the gawky lad Abraham Lincoln was taught manners. But indeed is not this bound up with any good training of character? The noblest schools of manhood have always laid great stress upon manners; whether it has been the Spartan discipline of youth in respect to their elders, through every attitude, as the expression of that reverence which they felt to be the bond of society; or the training of noble lads in the days of Chivalry to all high bred courtesy and gentle-manliness, as the soul of the true knight whose motto should be *noblesse oblige*. Goethe in his dream of the ideal education, in 'Wilhelm Meister,' made the training of youth in symbolic manners a conspicuous feature. So great a legislator as Moses was not above ordering concerning the manners of the people in his all embracing scheme of State education; "Ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations whom I cast out from before you." So scientific a critic as Herbert Spencer finds in manners the outcome of a people's social state, *i. e.* of its moral state. True, the manners may be the superficial crust, the hardened conventionalities which neither express nor cherish the inner spirit, but so may ritual religion, the manners of the soul with God, become wholly formal and dead. Nevertheless we do not decry the ritual of religion, nor should we any more depreciate the ritual of morality, manners. The aim of the true educator should be to find the best ritual of morality and spiritualize it; present it always lighted up with the ethical feeling of which it is the symbolic expression. The homes of really cultured and refined people carry on this work, among the other educational processes which Emerson says are the most important as being the most unconscious. For the children of the very poor, whose homes are rough and rude, unsoftened by grace, unlighted by beauty, uninspired by an atmosphere of gentleness, unadorned by living patterns of cultured courtesy, the need is supplied in the Kindergarten, the society of the *petite monde*. Herein the little ones have before them daily, in the persons of the Kindergarten and her assistants, a higher order of cultivation, all whose ways take on something of the refine-

ment that naturally clothes the lady; and, seen through the atmosphere of affection and admiration which surround them, are idealized before the little ones into models of manners, which instinctively waken their imitableness and unconsciously refine them and render them gentle, a very different thing from *genteel*. To the Kindergarten is drawn the respect and deference which accustom the children to that spirit which a certain venerable catechism describes as the duty of every child; an ideal we may pray not yet wholly antiquated in these days of democracy, where every man thinks himself as good as his neighbor and a little better too, if the hierarchy we find in nature is still any type of the divine ordinations or orderings of society: "My duty towards my neighbor is . . . to love, honor and succor my father and mother, to honor and obey the civil authority, to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters, to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters."

Among themselves in the daily relations of the Kindergarten, in its plays and games, the children are taught and trained to speak gently, to act politely, to show courtesy, to allow no rudeness or roughness in speech or action. The very singing is ordered with especial reference to this refining influence, and its soft, sweet tones contrast with the noisy and boisterous singing of the same class of children in the Sunday-school not only æsthetically but ethically.

The importance given to music in the Kindergarten, where everything that can be so taught is set to notes and sung into the children, is the carrying out of the hints given by the greatest thinkers, from Plato to Goethe, as to the formative power of music. One who knows nothing of these hints of the wise, and who had never reflected upon the subject, in watching a well ordered Kindergarten would feel instinctively the subtle influence of sweet music in softening the natures of the little ones, in filling them with buoyant gladness, in leading them into the sense of law, in harmonizing their whole natures. I remember a late occasion when I was profoundly impressed with this and felt the words of the masters, long familiar to me, open with unsuspected depth.

10. *Moral Culture in the Nurture of Unselfishness.*

In this miniature society there is a schooling in all the altruistic dispositions,—to use the rather pretentious phraseology of our later ethical philosophers, in lieu of any better expression—an education of the individual out of egoism, self-ism and the selfishness into which it rapidly runs; an instruction in the principles, and a training in the habits of those duties each one owes his neighbor, which constitute morality. As in the association which civilization begins, and in whose increase civilization develops, so in this miniature society, individualities are brought together from their separate homes in a common life, a community whose occupations, aims and interests are one; where the

pleasures of each one are bound up with the pleasures of his fellows, his own desires limited by the desires of his playmates, his self-regard continually brought into conflict with the resistance offered by the self-regard of others, and he is taught to exercise himself in thinking of his companions and to find a higher delight than the gratification of his own whims in the gratification of others' wishes. The law of this little society is the Golden Rule. This law is made to seem no mere hard imposition of a Power outside of them which they are painfully to obey, but the pleasant exposition of the Good Man within them, the law written in their hearts, which they can happily obey, finding that indeed "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The little ones are accustomed in their plays to consult each other's wishes and to subordinate their individual likings to the liking of some friend. "What shall we play now?" says the Kindergartner; and up goes the hand of some quick moving child—"Let us play the farmer." "Yes, that would be nice, but don't you think it would be still nicer if we were to ask Fanny to choose? She has been away you know, and looks as though she had a little wish in her mind. I see it in her eyes. Wouldn't it be the happiest thing for us all if we let our dear little sick Fanny choose?" And this appeal to the generosity and kindness instinct in all children, but repressed in all from the start by the barbarism into which the neglected nursery runs and unto which the competitive school system aspires, draws forth the ready response, "Oh! yes, let Fanny choose." Thus the little ones have their daily lesson, changing form with each day, but recurrent in some form on every day, in the meaning of the Master's word and the spirit of his life.

By the side of Johnny, who is bright and quick and is finishing his clay modeling easily, sits Eddie, who is slow of mind and dull of vision and awkward of hand and can't get his bird's nest done. The Kindergartner can of course help him, but a whisper to Johnny sets his fingers at work with Eddie's in the pleasure of kindly helpfulness, and the dull child is helped to hopeful action, while the bright child is helped to feel his ability a power to use for his brother's good. If any joy or sorrow comes to one of the little company it is made the occasion of calling out the friendly and fraternal sympathy of all the child community. "Have you heard the good news, children? Mary has a dear little baby brother, ever so sweet, too! Aren't we all glad?" And every face brightens and all eyes sparkle with the quick thrill of a common joy. "Poor dear little Maggie! Isn't it too bad! Her papa is very sick and she can't come to Kindergarten to-day. She is sitting at home, so sad, because her papa suffers so much and her mamma is so anxious. Don't we all feel sorry for her? And sha'n't we send word to her by Bessie, who lives right near her, that we all feel so sorry, and that we hope her papa will soon be well?"

Scarcely a day passes without some such occasion of calling out the sympathies of the individual children into the feeling of a larger life in common, in which they are members one of another and share each

other's joys and sorrows. "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ," may not be written upon the walls of the Kindergarten, but is written, day by day, in living lines upon the inner walls of those temples of the Holy Ghost, where it is read by the Spirit.

11. *Moral Culture through a Life, Corporate and Individual.*

In manifold ways each day also brings opportunities of impressing upon the little ones the mutually limiting rights of the members of a community, the reciprocal duties each one owes to every other one with whom he has relations, and to enforce the lesson, "No man liveth unto himself." A sense of corporate life grows up within this miniature community, which floats each life out upon the currents of a larger and nobler life. Each action shows its consequences upon others, and thus rebukes selfishness. Each little being is bound up with other beings, with the whole society, and his conduct affects the rest, changes the atmosphere of the whole company. Injustice is thus made to stalk forth in its own ugliness, falsehood to look its native dishonor, meanness to stand ashamed of itself in the condemning looks of the little community. Justice rises into nobleness, truth into sacredness, generosity into beauty, kindness into charming grace as their forms are mirrored in the radiant eyes of the approving company. That very deep word of the Apostle, "Let him that stole steal no more; for we are members one of another," grows in such a child community, a living truth, a principle of loftiest ethics; and in the sense of solidarity, the feeling of organic oneness, the highest joy of goodness and the deepest pain of badness becomes the perception of the influence, mysterious and omnipotent, which each atom exerts on the whole body, for weal or for woe, in the present and in the future.

And into this topmost reach of social morality the little community of the kindergarten begins to enter, blessing the individuals and preparing the soil for a higher social state, that life in common of the good time coming.

This social morality is cultured at no cost of the individuality. The sense of a life in common is not made to drive out the sense of a life in separateness, in which each soul stands face to face with the august Form of Ideal Goodness, to answer all alone to the Face which searches him out in his innermost being, and wins him to seek Him early and to find Him. The true Kindergarten is very scrupulous about lifting the responsibility in any way from the conscience of the child. In these appeals to the better nature of all, it is that better nature of some child which is left to decide the question, only helped by the way she puts the case. Even in a case of disobedience to her command she is careful not so much to be obeyed as to be obeyed by the self-won victory of the little rebel, who is given time to get over his sulk and to come to himself, and so to arise and say, in his own way, "I have sinned." Nothing in the whole system is more beautiful than this effort to have the child conquer himself.

The appeal is always through the sympathies, the affections, the imagination to the sense of right in each child, to the veiled throne where silent and alone Conscience sits in judgment. Only it is an appeal carried up to this final tribunal by the persuasive powers of social sympathy, the approbation of one's fellows, the judgment in its favor already pronounced by speaking faces and glowing eyes. As society affords the sphere for the development of conscience, so it furnishes the most subtle and powerful motives to conscience, and the individual life is perfected in the life in common.

12. *Moral Culture through an Atmosphere of Love.*

An atmosphere of love is thus breathed through the little society of the Kindergarten under which all the sweetness and graciousness of the true human nature, the nature of the Christ in us, opens and ripens in beauty and fragrance. All morality sums itself up into one word—Love. "Owe no man anything but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

To teach children to really love one another, to feel kindly, generous, unselfish dispositions towards each other, and to act upon those dispositions, is to write the whole code of conduct in the heart. And plainly this is not a matter for mere precept. It is not to be effected by the most eloquent exhortations of Sunday-school teachers or of pastors. It is a spirit to be breathed within the very souls of the little ones in their tenderest years, from an atmosphere charged with lovingness. This is what makes a loving mother in the home the true teacher of character in the true school, vastly more influential than the most perfect Sunday-school or the most wonderful church. And the Kindergarten is only a vicarious mothering for those whose homes lack this divine nurturing, a brooding over the void of unformed manhood and womanhood by a loving woman, bringing order out of the chaos and smiling to see it "very good." Nothing that can help this quickening of love is neglected in the Kindergarten. The daily work is wrought with some special aim in view, some thought of affection in the heart. It is to be a gift for father or mother, brother or sister, aunt or uncle, perhaps, unknown to them, for Kindergarten or for pastor.

As I write I lift my eyes to look at a horse pricked out on white paper and framed with pink paper strips, wrought, with what patient toil of loving fingers, by the cutest of little darkies, the baby of our Kindergarten, for his pastor; and duly presented—not without being lifted high in air and kissed most smackingly—to me on our last Christmas celebration. Thus the daily toil weaves subtle fibres of affection around the heart, models the soul into shape of gracious love.

All this beautiful moral culture is wrought through the happy play of the Child-Garden, with a minimum of talk about the duty of these simple virtues and with a maximum of influences surrounding the children to make them feel the happiness and blessedness of being good. The atmosphere is sunny with joy. The constant aim of the Kindergarten is to fill all with happiness. Cross looks and hard words are banished. The law of kindness rules, the touch of love conquers. No work is allowed to become a task. It is all kept *play*, and play whose buoyancy each child is made to feel inheres in the spirit of kindness and affection and goodness which breathes through the Kindergarten. They are all trying to do right, to speak truth, to show kindness, to feel love, and *therefore* all are happy. Now to be thoroughly happy, overflowing happy, happy with a warmth and cheeriness that lights up life as the spring sun lights up the earth, this is itself a culture of goodness. It is to fill these tender beings with stores of mellow feeling, of rich, ripe affection which must bud and blossom into the flowers of the goodness which are briefly comprehended under the one name of Love.

"Virtue kindles at the touch of joy,"

wrote Mrs. Browning, knowing well whereof she wrote. Joyousness pure and innocent and unselfish, overflowing all around like the rich gladness of the light, is the very life of the children of God. "Thou meetest him *that rejoiceth* and worketh righteousness." The "vital feelings of delight," of which Wordsworth spake, feed the vital actions of righteousness, in working which God is met. The happiness the little ones have, whose angels stand ever before the face of their Father in Heaven, to become like whom is to enter even here the Kingdom of Heaven, must be something like the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore, a joy which expresses and which feeds the purity and the goodness of the children of the Heaven-Father.

Is not an institution which provides for the cultivation of such social morality, under such an atmosphere of sunny joy, a true Child Garden, for the growth of the soul and its blossoming in beauty?

13. *Religious Culture in the Kindergarten.*

What is thus true of the Kindergarten as a school of morality is equally true of it as a school of religion. In carrying on such a culture of character as that described above, the Kindergarten would be doing a religious work even though no formal word were spoken concerning religion. It would be culturing the spirit out of which religion grows.

Love is the essence of religion. All forms of religion in their highest reach express this. Christianity positively affirms it. The very being of the Source and Fount of all spiritual life is essential love; "God is Love." He who manifested God to man summed the whole law in two commandments, the dual-sphered forms of this life of love in man—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy

neighbor as thyself." In the order of nature, love to our neighbor precedes and prepares for love to God. Mother and father, brother and sister awaken love in us, drawing it out toward themselves, and thus educating the soul to flow up in love unto the life of which these earthly affections are seen to be but the shadows. Human affections are the syllables which when put together spell out the love of God. They are the strands which twine together into the "bands of a man, the cords of love" wherewith,

"The whole round earth is every way bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

They are pulse beats in the earthly members of the Eternal Life which

"Throbs at the centre, heart-heaving alway ;"

the Life

"Whose throbs are love, whose thrills are songs."

The love of the dear ones in the home is not something other than the love of God, to be contrasted or even compared with the love we cherish towards the Father in Heaven ; it is part of that love, its lower forms, through which alone we climb up to a St. Augustine's passionate "What do I love when I love Thee, O my God?" "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen." Every true love is the respiration from the soul of man of the inspiration of God Himself, the Essential and Eternal Love. Could the Church succeed in making its members so live that it should again be said—"See how the Christians love one another"—the world would own a new inspiration of religious life, a new revelation of religious truth. If the Kindergarten succeeds in making a child-society, filled with gentle, kindly affection, pervaded with the spirit of love, we should rest persuaded that herein it was working the "preparation of the heart" for the higher love, to open duly in the Temple consciousness—"Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's ;" because in the flowing up of these springs of human love we should recognize, deep down below consciousness, the tiding of the Eternal Love, the well of water springing up within them unto everlasting life.

But indeed there need be no lack of direct words of the Heavenly Father and to Him, such as make up what we ordinarily think of as religious education. The Kindergarten provides for a natural child religion, in its talks and songs and simple prayers. In the games wherein the little ones are familiarized with the processes by which man's wants are supplied, their minds are led up to see the Fatherly Love which thus cares for the children of earth. Awe, reverence, worship, gratitude, affection are suggested and inspired, and the child soul is gently opened towards the Face of Holy Love shining down over it, casting its bright beams deep within the innocent mind in thoughts and feelings we dimly trace. Of this speech about God there is a sparing use, according to the wisdom of the truest teachers.

George McDonald tells how Ruald Bannerman's father never named GOD, till one rare, high moment, when nature spread her spell

of gladsome awe, and invited the utterance of the ineffable name and the revelation the marriage of word and work should make.

Glib garrulity about God is the vice of most religious teaching, "falsely so called," the bungling job-work of spiritual tyros who never should be set upon so fine a task as the culture of the soul. The simple child-songs, full of the spirit of religion, with so little about it, delicately uplifting the thought of the little ones to the Fatherly Goodness; the sacred word of child-hearted prayer in its one perfect form, "Our Father who art in heaven,—" as the old rubric would have ordered it, "said or sung" in the opening of the daily session; envelop the Kindergarten in a gracious sense of God, subtle as the atmosphere, and like it pervasive and all inspiring. Fröbel was profoundly religious himself, and sought to make his new education above all a true religious culture. If it had stopped short of this it would have been to him maimed and mutilated. But he was too humbly true to Nature's mothering to spoil, in trying to improve, her gentle, quiet, unobtrusive ways of opening the child soul to God. He knew that the crowning consciousness of God in the child soul must bide its time, and cannot be forced without deadly injury. He knew that the twelve years in the home go before the hour in the temple; are the rootings for that beautiful flowering.

To create such an atmosphere around the tender buds of being, and enswathe them ere they consciously open to know God with the felt presence of a Fatherly Goodness; to teach the little ones their duties one to another as brothers, in such wise that they shall come to recognize them as the mutual obligations of the common children of this Fatherly Love; to guide their inquiring minds to see through all the law and wisdom and beneficence of nature the care of this Fatherly Providence; to lift their tiny hands in simple, daily prayer to this Fatherly Worshipfulness—is not this a beautiful culture of essential religion in its child stage?

14. *This Complete Child Culture the Foundation of Church Work.*

Combining this physical, intellectual, industrial, moral and religious culture, does not the Kindergarten become a veritable Child-Garden, where the tender saplings of the Heavenly Father are well started towards symmetric, rhythmically rounded wholeness, or holiness? Is it not the cradle for the Christ Child, the infancy of the Coming Man, in whose unspoiled childhood growing normally towards perfection "The White Christ," as the Norsemen call him, the pure, clean, holy Image of the Father in the Son, is to be "formed in" men, to be "born in" them, till "we all come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ?"

I make no exaggerated plea for the Kindergarten. To its defects and limitations I am not wholly blind. Its imperfections, however, are not serious, its limitations are no valid objection to it. It is confessedly only a stage in education, not a complete system. But that

stage is the all important one of the foundation. True—"and pity 'tis, 'tis true"—we have no series of such Child-Gardens, transplanting the children, stage by stage, after Nature's plans, on into manhood and womanhood. After this fair beginning we have to transfer them to schools wholly uncongenial, not only to the best life of body and mind, but alas! of the soul also; where competition and rivalry, selfish ambition for priority of place, hard law and a stern spirit, chill and deaden the life so graciously begun, and prepare the children for the false society of strife and selfishness, "the world" which "if any man love, the love of *the Father* is not in him." Nevertheless, the foundation of the true education must be laid, in the assurance that it well laid the life will plumb somewhat squarer, and that upon it, shaped and ordered by its better form, string by string, the layers of the nobler education must rise, lifting humanity towards that blessed society yet to be upon the new earth over which the new heavens arch. Its mechanism, however wonderfully wise, truly carries within it no such regenerating power unless a living soul vitalizes it. As a mechanism, it seems to me the most perfect the world has known. But the finest thing about it is the imperious demand it makes for a true personality at the centre of its curious coil. No other system of education is so insistent upon the necessity of a soul within the system, depends so absolutely upon the personal influence of the teacher, and recognizes this subordination of method to spirit so frankly. It claims for itself that its mechanism provides a true means for the exercise of personal influence upon the lives of the little ones, prevents the waste of mis-directed effort, and the worse than waste such labor always leaves. It then seeks out and trains the true mothering woman, sympathizing with children, drawing out their confidence and affection, apt to teach, quick to inspire, an over-brooding presence of love, creative of order in the infantile chaos. The machinery can be worked in a woodenish way by any fairly intelligent woman. It can be successfully worked to accomplish its grand aims only by a noble woman, a vitalizing personality. The Kindergarten is the wonderful body of culture whose animating soul is the Kindergarten. Its power is that on which Christ always relied, that on which the Church still leans—personal influence upon individuals; and its sphere for that influence is the most plastic period of all life. The women whom the Kindergarten seeks to win to its cause are those who come to its work in this spirit; women who want not only an avocation, a means of winning bread and butter, but a vocation, a calling from God for man.

My claim for the Kindergarten is that it is a wonderfully wise system for utilizing the most valuable years of childhood, hitherto left to run to waste, in a beautiful provision for turning the play instinct of childhood into a genuine education of body, mind and soul; that it lays the foundation for a really integral culture, a culture of the whole man, i. e. of holiness; that it specially supplements the State system of education in the points where it is most lacking, the nurture of

health and industrial training; that in so far as it does all this it commends itself most strongly to the churches as a branch of their work, which is on every hand tending towards education, as the only means of preventing those unfavorable conditions for character which the poor find surrounding them, in their low health and their incompetency for skilled work; and that above all this it avowedly seeks, and is admirably adapted to secure, an initial culture of morality and religion patterned upon nature's own methods, i. e. God's own plans, whose fruition, if ever carried on through successive stages into adult life, would be that society of the Brotherhood of Man, in the Family of the Heavenly Father, which is the ideal unto which the Church slowly works, the Kingdom of God upon earth.

If the Church be sent to heal all manner of diseases, physical, mental and moral, in the spirit and power of its Lord, by disciplining men into the name—the truth, the life—of that Head of the new Humanity, then is Church Work the education of men and women towards that ideal of St. Paul—"Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

And for this task of Christian Education, wherein lies Church Work, the foundation must be laid—next above the lowest string in the building, the Family, and in its place where it does not truly exist—in some system of Child Culture, under the laws of Nature and in the Spirit of Christ. The only approach to such a system the world holds to-day is the Kindergarten. Therefore I claim it as the fundamental Church Work; the Infant School of the Future; the Child Garden wherein the little ones of the poor shall grow day by day in body, mind and soul, towards the pattern of all human life.

The day is not far off when our present pretense of Christian Education in the Sunday School will be viewed as the mere makeshift of a time of zeal without knowledge, a provisional agency awaiting the coming of a real soul-school; always perhaps to be continued for certain fine influences inherent in it, but at best only a supplement to the true culture of character; needing to be molded upon that wiser system. The day is not far off when every church aiming to carry on any real mission work will have, as the foundation for whatever system of schools it may be trying to build up, a Free Kindergarten. Meanwhile every church founding one becomes a pioneer of the true Church Work.

The thoroughly religious tone of this work can be secured, if any churches distrust the general supply of Kindergartners, by the pastor's selecting one of those blessed women whom almost every congregation develops—apt to teach, full of love to children and to God—and persuading her to train as a Kindergartner, and then take charge of the Parochial Kindergarten.

True, this work will be costly in comparison with the poor work now done so cheaply and with such apparently large results. But as the

real spirit of love to God and man inspires the activity of the churches, and a true discernment of what is needing to be done grows upon them, the cackling and crowing of congregations over their ever-to-be-so-much-admired works, will give place to a quieter and humbler feeling; and churches will be glad to do some smaller work, as men judge, if so it may only be true work for man well done in the Spirit of Christ; and will rest content to sink a thousand dollars a year in nurturing fifty or a hundred little ones. Only poor work is cheap. And church work must needs first be sound, and only then be cheap as may be.

True also the State may be appealed to for this pre-primary schooling, and may engraft the Kindergarten upon the Common School System, as has been done in some places, and thus relieve the Church of this charge. But if what has been here said commends itself to the minds of the clergy, and of those interested in Church Work, it will suggest to them strong reasons why the Church should not seek to be thus relieved, should be even positively unwilling to be thus relieved, should hasten to occupy the ground with Church Kindergartens. So fine and delicate a work, on the most plastic of all material, by the most personal of powers, seems greatly jeopardized by being made part of a cumbrous official system. It may hold its subtle spirit within this sphere, but there is great risk of an unconscious lowering of tone, an insensible evaporation of the spirit of the Kindergarten in the routine-working of its mechanism. Above all other branches of education it needs to be fed from the deepest springs of motive power, to be tided with a holy enthusiasm, to be made a real religious ministry. And because, with all its defects in other respects, the Church best supplies this spirit which is the vital essence of the Kindergarten, I hope to see it taken up by the churches. The nurture of early childhood is so pre-eminently the very task of the Church that I am persuaded she needs only to understand this blessed institution to claim it, as the development of that Spirit of Truth who is ever revealing to men, as they are able to bear them, the things needing to be done for the health of humanity, for the perfecting of the body of Christ.

15. *Providential Preparation of the Churches for Welcoming this Work.*

As I thus urge upon the careful consideration of my brethren of the clergy, of all branches of the Church of Christ, the claims to a prominent position in their Church Work of an institution that is only beginning to be seriously considered in this country, an institution which has upon its surface so little of that wherein many have been accustomed to find all Church Work, I am encouraged by the signs on every hand of the dawning of a day of reconciliation, wherein those who have stood apart in their opinions about Church Work are to find themselves face to face. Protestantism has separated along two lines of work, drawn by two schools of thought. Some branches of Protestantism have based their work in the culture of Christian character upon the child experience of *formation*, having a strong sense of the organic

life of a holy humanity. Others have based their work in the culture of Christian character upon the adult experience of *re-formation*, having a strong sense of the organic life of a sinful humanity.

Lutheranism, the Church of England and its American daughter the Protestant Episcopal Church have held to the idea of nurture, and have sought to grow normally from infancy the sons and daughters of The Almighty. They are learning, however, that with the best nurture there will be lapses, deep and wide; that the children of the Heavenly Father may turn out prodigals, needing in the far-off land to say to themselves, "I will arise and go to my Father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned." They are developing thus, alike in the Evangelical and Ritualistic wings, the revivalistic spirit and methods, so that a genuine Methodist or Baptist would feel quite at home in the "Gospel Meeting" or "The Mission." While thus drawing nigh to their sister churches in the after work of conversion, the churches of nurture ought to be ready to receive this system of child culture.

Most of the branches of Protestant Christianity have centered their work upon conversion, seeking to recreate the children of Adam into the sons and daughters of the Lord. Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists and Baptists are now remembering that under and back of the old Adam there was in every man, as man, the older Christ; a spiritual nature, even though dormant, which could open, and should open, in every child into the sonship of God. They are thus feeling their way to sub-soil their needful work of conversion with the basic work of nurture; and are seeking to grow the divine nature in childhood before the devilish nature develops a mastery of the being. The Sunday School receives most attention in these denominations, and shows thus the conscious need of education as the first of church works. The dissatisfaction felt with it indicates the felt need of something more truly nurturing. They are more or less consciously groping, under the leadings of The Spirit of Truth, who is guiding men into all truth, in search of a system which will prove, what Dr. Bushnell craved as the need of the churches, a true "Christian Nurture."

And thus all branches of Protestantism ought to be able now to receive this gospel of God's servant, Frederick Fröbel, in their own tongue, and welcome it, and together walk in the steps of the true education towards that new earth into which, as written of old, "a little child shall lead them."

16. *This Theory Tested by Experience.*

It only remains to be added that this theory of the Kindergarten in Church Work has been submitted to the test of experiment, by the Church I have the privilege of serving, and that the result is a satisfactory verification of the theory. Three years ago the Anthon Memorial Church in New York opened its Free Kindergarten. A meeting of ladies was called and an address made by Miss Peabody, the venerable apostle of the Kindergarten in the United States, whose long life of noble service in the cause of education crowns its honored years with

the fine enthusiasm in which, at the age when most are content with rest, she has consecrated herself to this gospel of the Christ Child. A simple organization was effected from among the ladies interested in the idea, under an energetic management. A subscription list was soon filled out warranting a year's experiment. Thanks to the counsel of the best authority, that of Mad. Kraus-Boelte, we were led to a most fortunate choice for our Kindergartner. Miss Mary L. Van Wagenen had cherished the idea of a Free Kindergartner for the poor, and brought to this venture that combination of qualities described above as essential to the true Kindergartner, which in her person has made this experiment so satisfactory a success. A number of young ladies volunteered to act as unpaid assistants. The Sunday-school room of the church was placed at the use of the Kindergarten Association, and so in due time the Kindergarten was opened. Since then it has been in session for eight months of each year, on five days of the week, from 9½ A. M. to 1 P. M. About seventy children have been kept on the roll, as many as can be well cared for by our force of assistants.

The plan of volunteer assistants has not proven thoroughly successful, though we still have a few in attendance. It was only designed as a provisional supply. After the first year a training class for Kindergartners was opened, through which several of her amateur helpers have passed, some into the charge of new Kindergartens, and others into the position of qualified assistants in our own Kindergarten. It is our intention to salary such assistants, as we are able, and thus secure regular and skilled service.

To further the physical culture of the Kindergarten a substantial dinner has been provided daily for the children, and out of door excursions made in suitable seasons.

The mental influence on the children has been very marked. The brightness of their faces is an expression of the intellectual quickening that has taken place. Some of the little ones have developed wonderfully. Their moral growth has been no less marked. Some of the children seem literally re-made. And generally, in the charming spiritual atmosphere of this Child Garden, there seem to be budding those "fruits of the spirit" which are "love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness." The children are not saints by any means; but they are growing happily, joyously, and on the whole beautifully, and as fast as we dare expect. The best testimony to the influence of the work is the appreciation the poor mothers show of its effects. The children have even become missionaries of cleanliness, order and love, and a little child is leading many a household towards some better life. No startling results are sought. We are satisfied to trust the future with the harvest of this well used spring time.

It has cost us about \$1,000 a year, and we feel that it is a good investment for Christ. Any church with this amount can plant the infant school of the future, and the American Fröbel Union will help it to a good Kindergartner.

FROEBEL, KINDERGARTEN, AND CHILD CULTURE PAPERS.

Republished from Barnard's American Journal of Education in a Volume of 720 pages, in furtherance of the objects of the American Froebel Union.

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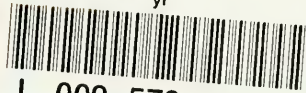
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